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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 OTTAWA 002104

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CAN, WHA/PDA
WHITE HOUSE PASS NSC/WEUROPE, NSC/WHA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [OIIP](#) [OPRC](#) [CA](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAQ; AFRICA; ICC

IRAQ

[11.](#) "Fallout from Iraq"

The centrist Winnipeg Free Press observed (7/8):

"...Mr. Bush's reasons for going to war may be questioned more and more sharply, as next year's presidential election approaches, if popular support for the Iraq invasion ebbs and poor performance of the U.S. economy saps confidence in the president's leadership. In such a context, a conclusion that Mr. Bush unwittingly misled the country could be a further blow to his political support."

[12.](#) "A casualty of war"

Under the sub-heading, "Exaggerating Saddam's sins was foolish and unnecessary," the nationalist Ottawa Citizen editorialized (7/11): "...If Mr. Bush knowingly cited false intelligence, his credibility is profoundly damaged. If he believed in the intelligence because his subordinates misled him, the credibility of the entire administration is damaged. The ones who benefit from the controversy are those who seek to delegitimize the deployment of U.S. power. The next time Mr. Bush sounds the alarm about a mad dictator or terrorist organization, critics will ask why they should believe him.... As we and others argued from the beginning, Saddam's fetish for ugly weapons was only one of the reasons why he had to go. Liberating millions of Iraqis, and trying to light the spark of democratization and reform in the Arab world, were - and still are - worthy goals."

[13.](#) "Small Lies"

Editorialist Mario Roy wrote in the centrist La Presse (7/12): "It has now been proven that 10 Downing Street and the White House lied about Iraq. Lied on relatively minor points. But that is not what is important.... The unilateralism of the American offensive, its real justification which was to launch a new and dangerous preventive strike strategy, the lack of post-war planning and consequently the present situation in Iraq...which was predictable and had been predicted by the international community tends to give credence to an almost brutal thesis: the Bush administration is not fit to govern such a big, influential, powerful nation.... This administration is showing itself to be unable to correctly absorb the long term shock of September 11, the toughest ever taken by the Americans since the Civil War. Add to this the economic quagmire...and you reach a wish, a prayer, a necessity: George W. Bush must not be reelected in 2004."

AFRICA

[14.](#) "Blame America for conflict in Liberia"

Writer Gerald Caplan observed in the leading Globe and Mail (7/11): "...The Bush administration now believes it needs Africa to combat terrorism, as a giant market for American products, and for its abundance of high-quality oil. It needs Liberia to be stable. But after a century of American-backed regimes and corporations, the Liberian people also need to become a nation again - an enormously difficult and expensive project. Mr. Bush should intervene not out of great humanitarian motives, but out of basic accountability. For damages knowingly incurred, his country owes Liberians compensation in full."

[15.](#) "Trip to Africa"

The conservative Saskatoon StarPhoenix commented (7/8):

"...While campaigning, Bush complained about how the U.S. was overextended overseas. Yet, since being elected, he has used the U.S. army more than any other president since the Vietnam war but so far has been unsuccessful at destroying al-Qaida, catching its leaders or even corralling Saddam Hussein. Despite this, his stock continues to be high with Americans. One wonders, however, how long that can continue. As he hops through five African nations this week (adding the likes of Senegal, Uganda and Botswana to the list of countries - unlike Canada - to which he's had a state visit), Bush must hope he can deflect attention from the final leg of his current mandate.... The continent is awash in small and medium arms. Basic

family and community infrastructures have been destroyed by war and disease. Both conditions have been made worse by Bush's decision to stop aid to groups advocating birth control (and hence battling AIDS and promoting of women's rights in Africa) and his withdrawal from global efforts to curb small-arms trade. He has further alienated would-be democrats by trying to coerce countries (all of the Caribbean, for example) which refuse to exempt the U.S. from terms of the International Criminal Court. It would be dangerous to underestimate the determination of Americans to carry the war on terror to a decisive conclusion. It would be equally dangerous to believe that an American president can indefinitely get away with riding the economy into the ground, alienating allies and allowing U.S. interests and GIs to get picked off one at a time without delivering tangible results. Bush's African trip promises to be the harbinger of an interesting year."

16. "Going into Liberia"

The leading Globe and Mail opined (7/4): "The United States appears poised to send troops into Liberia at the head of a multinational peacekeeping force. President George W. Bush says he will not be hurried into a decision, but the longer he waits the more dire the humanitarian crisis grows.... As the Liberian violence escalates, the flood of refugees poses yet another threat to regional stability. And here's a point made by several U.S. experts: Chaos, violence and the lack of economic opportunities create a prime breeding and recruiting ground for killers and terrorists, as the Americans found in Somalia. All of this adds up to a compelling case for a U.S.-led rescue mission. And the sooner the better."

17. "'George Bush, save Liberia'"

Columnist Marcus Gee commented in the leading Globe and Mail (7/4): "In a world ablaze with anti-Americanism, the Liberians' plea for U.S. intervention is more than just a curiosity. It is a golden opportunity.... A forceful intervention in Liberia by the world's superpower would demonstrate that the United States is genuine when it says that it stands for human rights and democracy.... If Mr. Bush listens to his allies and does the right thing in Liberia, it will help show that his country is indeed a benevolent - not just a self-interested - superpower. If he doesn't, skepticism about American motives will only rise. The UN's Mr. Annan put it best: All eyes, he said, are on the United States."

ICC

18. "U.S. speaks loudly and carries a big stick to dodge international court"

Columnist Jonathan Manthorpe wrote in the left-of-center Vancouver Sun (7/10): "...Having failed to convince much of the world that the International Criminal Court, established a year ago in the Hague, is a dangerous piece of political tomfoolery, Washington has moved to arm-twisting and bribery to limit the court's effectiveness. The administration of President George W. Bush, with the backing of Congress, intends to withdraw military aid to about 37 of its allies because they refuse to exempt American servicemen and women from possible prosecution by the ICC.... If the reaction to America's attempt to protect its people is over the top, so too is Washington's analysis of the dangers of the international court. The Rome treaty is full of safeguards - many injected by the U.S. - against frivolous, politically inspired prosecutions. Moreover, the court is designed to function only in those areas where national governments are unwilling or unable to act. The court is staffed by highly qualified judges and prosecutors, none of whom wants to waste time or effort on anti-American witch hunts. The court's concern is systematic abuses of human rights in places where local people have no other recourse to justice. So its focus is on places like the Balkans, Congo, Burma and West Africa. It would be a travesty if this valuable effort at justice-without-borders was undermined because of hysterical political campaigns on both sides."